

A Thousand Days

by Joani Reese

It's so much more respectable to drown
one's woes beneath the channel's oily sheen.
I never should have married for a crown.

The tower's chill. I pace from stone to stone,
my throne a threadbare carpet, and it seems
it's so much more respectable to drown.

My daughter has her father's hair. She's known
to be a legal heir. I hope she yearns
to marry *no one*, even for a crown.

Some claim my brother lay with me, I own
it's possible, but not whilst I was queen--
It's so much more respectable to drown.

Lord Cromwell's stock is rising like the sun,
his stealthy machinations slipped between
King Henry and myself. I've lost the crown.

The swordsman from Calais, whose stroke is clean,
will part me from my life for Lady Jane.
It's so much more respectable to drown.
I never should have married for a crown.

